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ABSTRACT

As technical communication is a young academic discipline, evaluating technical communication faculty for promotion, tenure, and merit purposes requires special awareness and care. To determine reasonable expectations of faculty achievement, a study documented the range, types, and frequency of activities of 12 professors and 12 associate professors identified as leaders in technical communication. Among other findings, the study showed that these professors taught a large number of undergraduate service offerings, produced many articles and textbooks but very few scholarly books, and performed a large number of service activities, including committee work for colleges and professional organizations and consulting for publishing houses. Administrators and faculty interested in developing evaluation guidelines should consider John A. Centra's book, "Determining Faculty Effectiveness." Evaluation of technical communication faculty should be based on the same criteria used to evaluate faculty in other fields: the quality, quantity, and kind of work they do in teaching, research, and service activities. Suggestions for effective evaluations include supplementing student evaluation of teaching with peer evaluations, using outside reviewers to evaluate the quality of faculty members' research, and considering a wide variety of faculty service accomplishments, such as serving on doctoral and master's committees and doing consulting and editorial work. (MM)

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Evaluating Technical Communication Faculty: Some Empirically-Based Criteria and Guidelines

Professor Dwight W. Stevenson

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CS 208 235

Evaluating Technical Communication Faculty: Some Empirically-Based Criteria and Guidelines

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To evaluate Technical Communication faculty requires understanding of the distinctive nature of the research, teaching, and service performed by faculty in the field. The study presented here documents the work situations and accomplishments of a cadre of twenty-four accomplished faculty members in Technical Communication. The study group, identified by a prior survey of 275 people in technical writing, composition, and rhetoric, provides an empirical basis for defining the kinds and quantities of work that currently can be expected in the field. The study thus helps to provide empirically-based guidelines and criteria for evaluation. Included also is a discussion of other relevent research on faculty evaluation.

In theory, evaluating Technical Communication faculty for promotion, tenure, and merit purposes should be no different from evaluating faculty in any academic discipline. They are, after all, faculty members first and Technical Communication faculty second. Yet if there are no theoretical issues that distinguish their evaluation from the evaluation of other faculty, there are a host of practical, contextual issues to be faced both by the evaluators and by those evaluated. Technical Communication is a young academic discipline with an ambiguous role in most institutions. In most places it is a service program, but even in schools with degree programs in Technical Communication its role is somewhat ambiguous because the degree is usually a "track" in a parent department such as English or Engineering. The role is more puzzling still in schools in which a single undergraduate service offering is provided by one or two faculty members in one unit to the undergraduate students of another unit--a fairly typical pattern.

Technical Communication has few degree programs. There are almost no graduate degree programs. The faculty often have degree backgrounds in other disciplines and sometimes teach and publish in more than one discipline. There are few "members" nationally, and often only a handful locally. Thus, Technical Communication cannot yet be seen as just another discipline like other established disciplines. And in that light, evaluating Technical Communication faculty cannot--as a practical matter--be just another instance of conventional faculty evaluation.

Of course, I am not asserting that evaluation of Technical Communication faculty should be preferential; all of us would agree, I think, that if the discipline is ever to achieve peer status in academic institutions it must view itself as a peer and expect to be treated as a peer. I am merely asserting that evaluation of Technical Communication faculty is at present difficult for a variety of contextual and historical reasons and that it therefore requires special awareness and care.

The evidences of the practical difficulties to which I allude are no doubt experientially so familiar that no more than a few examples need be mentioned. Serve as a candidate for promotion but once, or serve as an administrator or as the external evaluator in but one promotion/ tenure review case, and the issues are raised: what kinds of publication are appropriate for Technical Communication faculty? How should consulting be regarded by administrators in an English department where perhaps the only consulting work is done by Technical Communication faculty? How much does the authoring of pedagogical articles or textbooks appropriately "count" in the evaluation process?

- A dean writes [1], "Whether theoretical or applied, scholarship and research in Technical Communication are generically different from what humanists are used to. In addition, we need to consider the relative value of 'outside' activities such as consulting and short-term workshops, both usually not in the humanistic domain. ...We encounter some difficulties because faculty members, often in English, are unfamiliar with the scholarly work done by teachers of technical writing, and suspicious of its value."

- A faculty member asks, "...why do technical writing teachers need a special set of guidelines?"

- Another states, "...particularly in a field like techical writing with which no one else on the university's evaluation committee is familiar are the opinions of others in your field (siginificant) regarding what you have published."

- Still another asserts, "Our strength is our service role."

- A candidate for tenure asks, " Can I use material I wrote for money--in one case a 600 page book--as evidence of scholarship? ...Would my time have been better-spent banging out an article this summer rather than working with the XYZ Corporation?"

- Another candidate writes, "Those of us who are hired because we have expertise in technical and other areas find ourselves in a no-win situation when we come up for tenure."

- A faculty member writes, "I (also) have to wonder why someone with a Ph.D. in English would not want to publish in literature."

- A member of a university promotion and tenure committee writes, "My university pretends to give heavy weight to (external) letters--and they must be in the file--but actually, we count publications and papers presented. We count years. We hear things on the grapevine."

- And another dean writes, "I think you should look and see what the most respected and accomplished members of your professional group have done and then use that as a bench mark."

This whole area of evaluation of faculty--any faculty--is by definition a difficult one. Different schools, different needs, differently weighted criteria, and different people make it difficult enough. Yet in the evaluation of Technical Communication faculty there are, its seems, special practical problems to be investigated. In an acknowledged small way, that is the purpose of this panel at CCCC. It is also the purpose of the research reported in this paper. By presenting to you the results of a two-tiered survey research project, I hope to shed light both on issues of appropriate criteria for evaluation of Technical Communication faculty and on issues of appropriate guidelines.

The Objectives of the Research

I have sought to study details of the work situations and accomplishments of a cadre of Technical Communication faculty--twelve Professors and twelve Associate Professors--identified nationally by a prior survey of 275 people in the fields of Technical Communication, Composition, and Rhetoric.

Specifically, I have sought to learn as much as I could about what and how much they teach, what they publish, where, and how frequently, what kinds of service roles they perform, and a number of other questions about their accomplishments. My central purpose has been to document the range, types, and frequency of the activities of this group in order to provide some empirical basis for defining what can presently be seen as "reasonable expectations" in the field of Technical Communication. This cadre, with acknowledged accomplishments in teaching, research, and service, are well qualified to serve (and frequently do) as external reviewers in promotion and tenure reviews of candidates in Technical Communication; they are people whose views have reasonable weight not only with those in the field but also with the administrators responsible for the evaluation of Technical Communication faculty. Thus, they are people from whom we can learn something useful in matters of evaluation merely by studying what they do.

Let me hasten to explain what I have <u>not</u> tried to do in this study. I have <u>not</u> tried to determine how different areas of accomplishment are or should be weighted in different schools as they evaluate faculty. Obviously schools appropriately define their missions in quite different ways and must therefore give different weights to the activities of their faculties. Thus if my research may be helpful in defining <u>kinds of work</u> and <u>quantities of work</u> in Technical Communication, it cannot and should not tell administrators how to set <u>priorities among different types of work</u>.

Neither have I attempted to provide statistical indices of the <u>quality</u> of the different types of work done by people in Technical Communication. Although we may learn something useful about <u>kinds of work</u> and <u>quantities of work</u>--two of three important issues in any evaluation--the key question is, "what is the <u>quality of the work</u>?" Yet that key question cannot be answered by survey research; it defies quantification and can be answered only by careful, informed, piece-by-piece analysis.

In sum, my objectives are limited and specific, but having myself been a candidate for promotion, having been an administrator charged with evaluating Technical Communication faculty, and having been an external reviewer for candidates at other institutions, I have wanted the sort of empirical information that this research can provide. Others tell me that they have wanted it too. Thus I hope it will be helpful.

The Research Method

Four stages were required to produce profiles of the professional activity of a cadre of Technical Communication faculty. These were as follows:

1. Letters were sent to 275 faculty members throughout the country, primarily to faculty who teach Technical Communication but including also some faculty in composition or rhetoric when those programs were administratively associated with the Technical Communication offerings. Included among those surveyed were a cross-section of all academic ranks from entry-level Assistant Professors to department heads and--in two cases--deans. Also included was a cross-section of types of schools: public universities (47% of the survey group), private universities (12%), technical institutes (13%), four-year liberal arts colleges (12%), two-year institutions (12%), and others (6%). This mailing list was prepared from a variety of sources: CCCC membership, NCTE Committee on Scientific and Technical Communication membership, ATTW membership, lists of people who had published articles during the past five years in the field , and from participant lists from the Michigan, Rensselaer, Old Dominion, and Rice University conferences on Teaching Technical Communication. The mailing was sent to forty-one states and Canada.

In these letters, the 275 respondents were asked to help identify a cadre of Technical Communication faculty <u>outside</u> their own departments, a group of "three or four to serve as external reviewers in promotion and tenure review cases." Specifically I asked that they identify people whose views and scholarly objectivity would carry weight both inside and outside the Technical Communication community--with faculty and with administrators. They were given a postcard upon which to return their lists of names and they were invited to send letters to expand upon their recommendations. In all, I received 98 postcards and letters in response to my request (a 35 percent response, quite good for survey research).

2. Using the responses to the first questionnaire, I identified a group of people whose names appeared most frequently in the responses. Specifically, I identified a group of 27 people nationwide. Again, this list was prepared with an attempt to provide representation for types of schools, academic ranks, and ages, although the principal basis for choice was number of citations by the first survey group. The final study group included some Associate Professors who had received tenure literally during the semester of the survey as well as some full Professors nearing retirement. Untenured Assistant Professors were not included.

3. After having identified the study group members, I wrote to each, asking for a detailed vita and for his or her response to a questionnaire in which I asked a number of specific questions about teaching accomplishments, scholarship/ research, and service. In all I received responses from 25 of the 27 persons from whom I requested responses (92 percent).

4. In the final stage of the process I analysed the responses to the questionnaire and the supporting vita information. I tabulated the results, using a standard spread-sheet computer program (LisaCalc), and from those I prepared the graphic results presented below. In order to assure the promised anonymity of the survey group I identified individuals only by alphabet letters--capital letters for Professors, lower case letters for Associates. In addition, I assured that even the survey group members cannot not know with certainty whether their personal data is included in the final results. I have done this by arbitrarily removing from the tabulation one of the 25 respondents.

Results

Their Teaching Activities

In general, the picture that emerges is of a faculty who have fairly heavy teaching loads consisting in significant part of undergraduate, non-degree, service offerings in Technical Communication.

Approximately half of the group surveyed (specifically, 11 of the 24) do teach in programs which grant Technical Communication degrees of some kind. These faculty, of course, teach degree candidates at the undergraduate level and (in 9 cases) at the graduate level--although usually not beyond the master's level and usually as only a small part of their teaching loads. For the other half of the survey group, however, the typical teaching load consists of service courses for undergraduates--about six of them per year if we count summer teaching and convert all courses to semester pattern.

There are certainly exceptions to that pattern: a few faculty teach at the doctoral level (4); a few teach literature courses (6); a few even teach some courses other then technical writing, composition, or literature (2); and some have what must seem light teaching loads to some of the others: four semester-type courses per year was the lowest number for people not on administratively-released time. On the whole, however, there is a lot of undergraduate service teaching being done by the survey group.

A portrait of the typical teaching loads of the survey group (normalized over a two-year period and adjusted to represent semester-type courses) is as follows (see Figure 1):

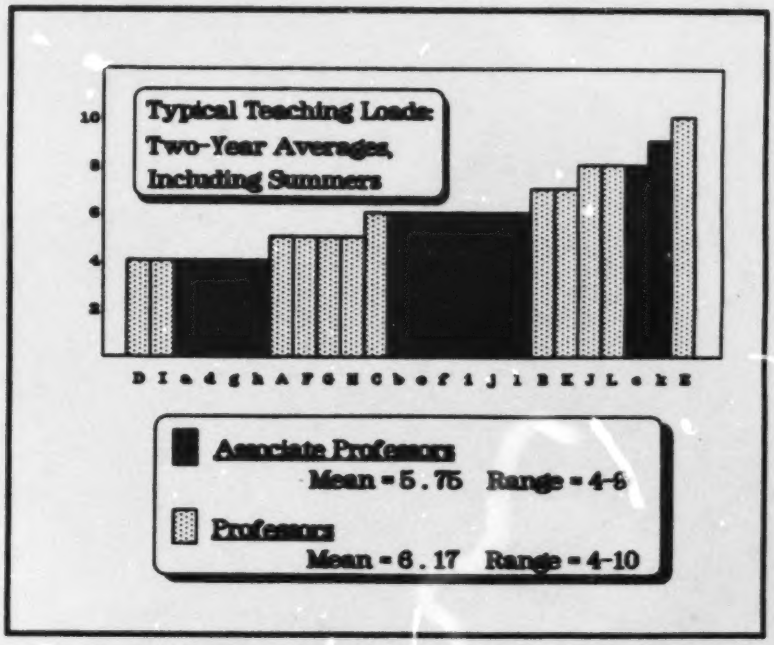

Figure 1. Typical Teaching Loads of Technical Communication Faculty

If we look at the same group in a "snapshot" (that is, what are they teaching this term?), we see the following picture of the numbers of courses and distribution by types (see Figures 2 and 3):

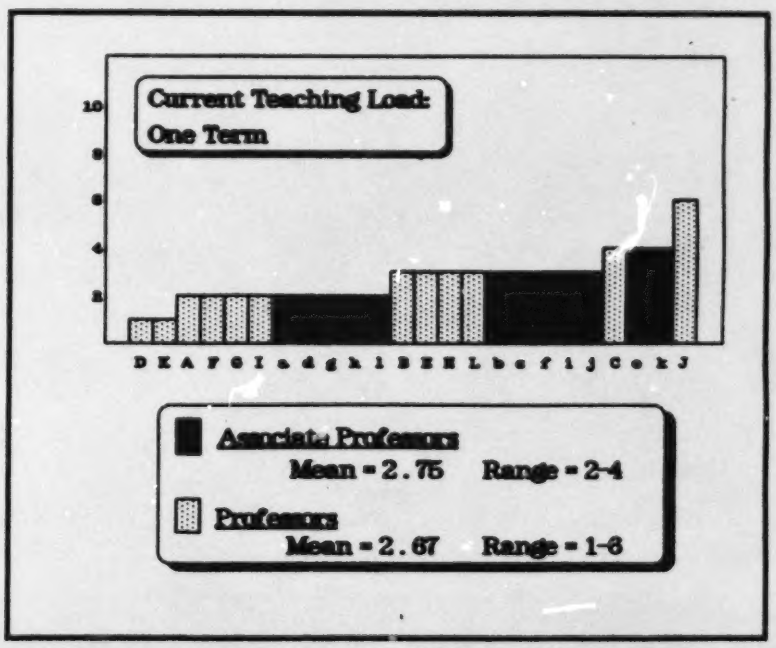

Figure 2. Teaching Load, One Term, of Technical Communication Faculty

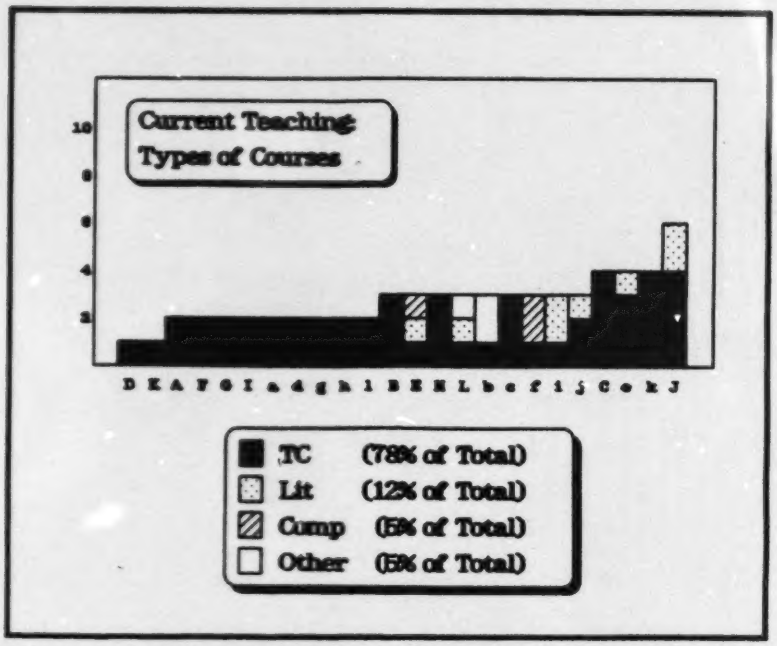

Figure 3. Types of Courses Taught by Technical Communication Faculty

And again looking at the same "snapshot" of current teaching in terms of undergraduate/ graduate distribution, we see an emphasis upon undergraduate teaching (see Figure 4):

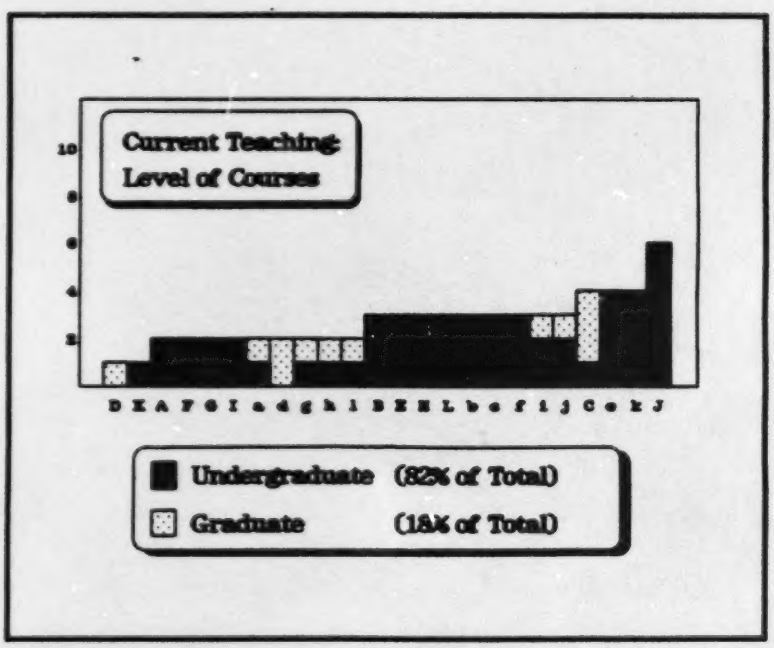

Figure 4. Levels of Courses Taught by Technical Communication Faculty

In addition to offering a number of existing courses, the survey group are also developing and introducing new courses. For example, over a two-year period, we see the following record of new course development among fourteen of the group's members (see Figure 5):

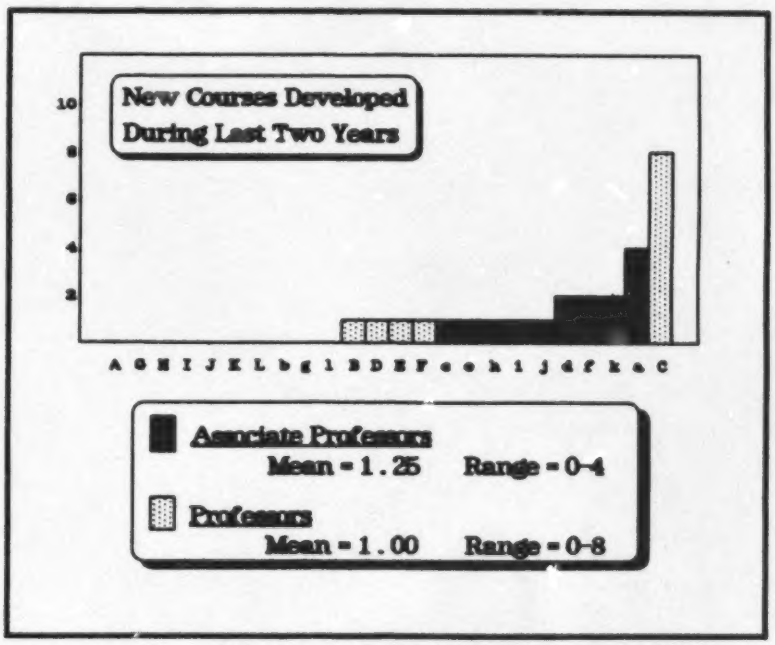

Figure 5. New Courses Developed by Technical Communication Faculty

Along with their regular teaching and new course development, the survey group (three-quarters of them) are also involved in significant amounts of summer workshop teaching. They serve also to train and supervise TA's or other faculty (two-thirds of them). And they also typically handle fairly large numbers of "directed studies" students on individual projects in Technical Communication (more than half of them).

As to the performance of these teachers, it is impossible to determine a standard numerical ranking because the measures used differ so much from campus to campus. However, it is clear that the basic measure of teaching effectiveness is the student evaluation and that, whatever the system used, these teachers are uniformly highly ranked by that measure. All but two of the group members reported that their teaching is evaluated by students, that in most cases these evaluations are forwarded to administrators for use in annual or promotion/ tenure evaluations, and that, in cases where a numerical system is used, the typical rankings are in the top quartile. It is interesting to note that relatively few of the survey group members have their teaching formally and directly evaluated by any mechanism other than student evaluations--either by peers or by administrators who visit their classes or examine their course materials.

Their Research and Scholarly Activities

Applied research rather than basic, theoretical, experimental, or historical research can be seen as characteristic among the survey group. That is, the emphasis is characteristically on questions "how to do it" or the "how to teach it" more than upon the "what is it" or "what is happening" or "what causes it" or "what might it be" or "how can we describe it" questions of traditional research in either liberal arts or social science disciplines. This is not to say, however, that the survey group are not doing substantive research and publishing. In fact, the range and quantity of their work is fairly substantial--especially when we remember the teaching situations and loads characteristic among the survey group.

If we look at book publication the absence of scholarly books is striking. Only one of the twenty-four members in the group had published a scholarly book within the past five years (although several are working on such books at present.) On the other hand, the textbooks produced by the survey group are reasonably numerous. Two persons had produced three; five had produced two; and five others had produced one in the five-year period. In all, exactly half of the group had published at least one textbook in the five-year review period--a total of 21 books among them. In addition, twelve of the survey group had served as editors for an additional fourteen books (most of them anthologies) during the same period. If we look at book publication overall, the five-year view is as follows (see Figure 6):

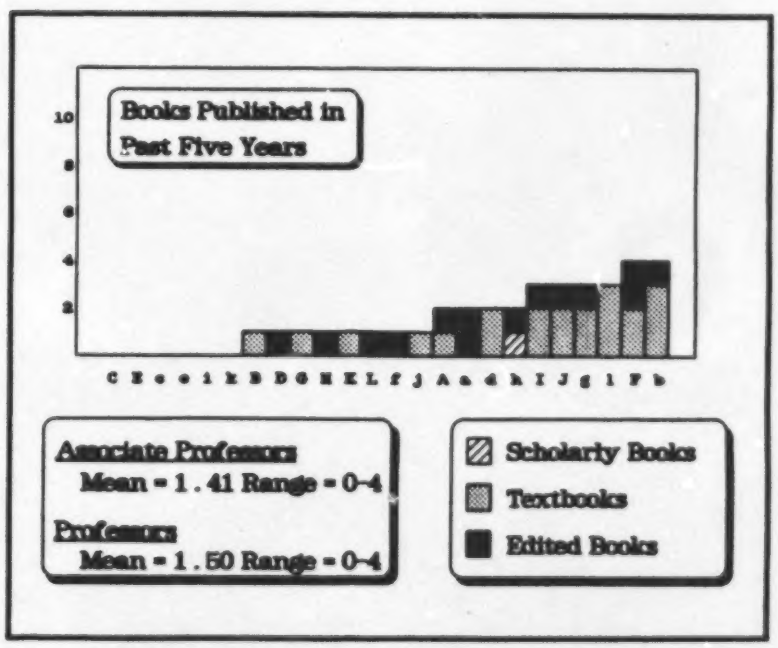

Figure 6. Book Publication by Technical Communication Faculty

When we look at other forms of publication among the group, again we see a number of publications of a very applied sort but in addition many of a more theoretical sort. Refereed journal articles were published in a wide variety of journals by all but three of the survey group during the review period. Specifically, the group published 101 refereed articles and 38 chapters in books during the five-year period, with a range of from none to sixteen, and with a mean of just about one per year. Similarly, the group published unrefereed journal articles (40), reviews and review articles (55), and articles in proceedings (74). They also published reports of various sorts (20), edited journals (11), presented a large number of papers at professional conferences (248), and published a large but uncountable number of "other" unclassifiable publications. The totals are as follows (see Figures 7-9):

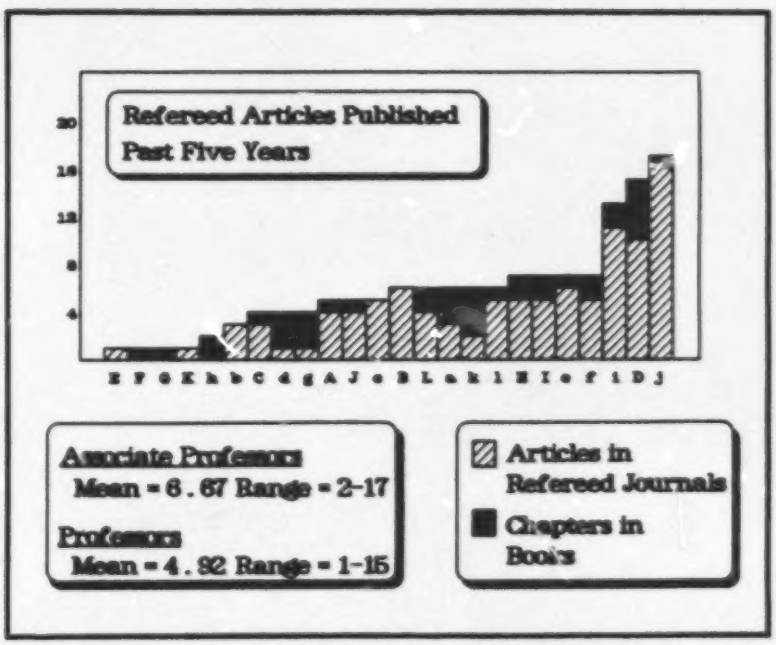

Figure 7. Refereed Article Publication by Technical Communication Faculty

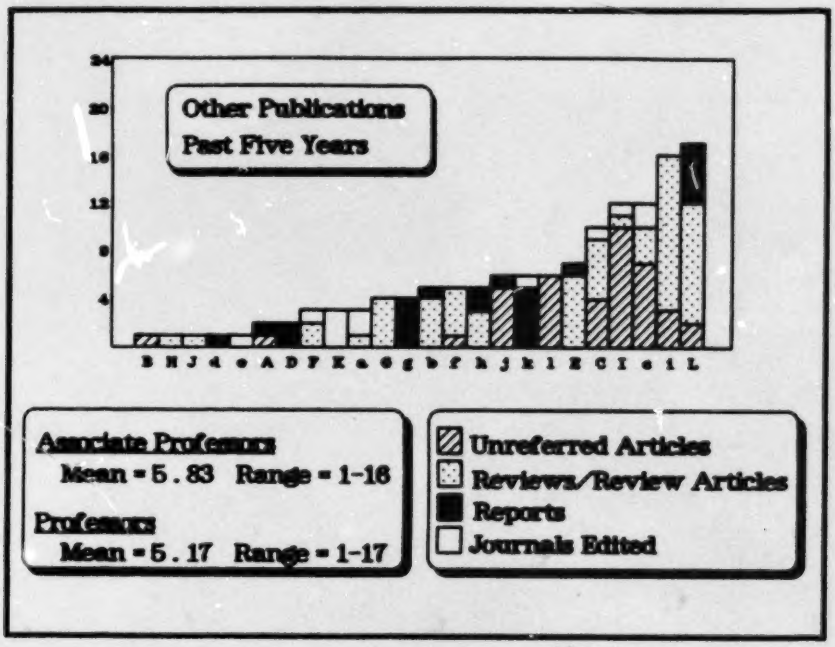

Figure 8. Other Publications by Technical Communication Faculty

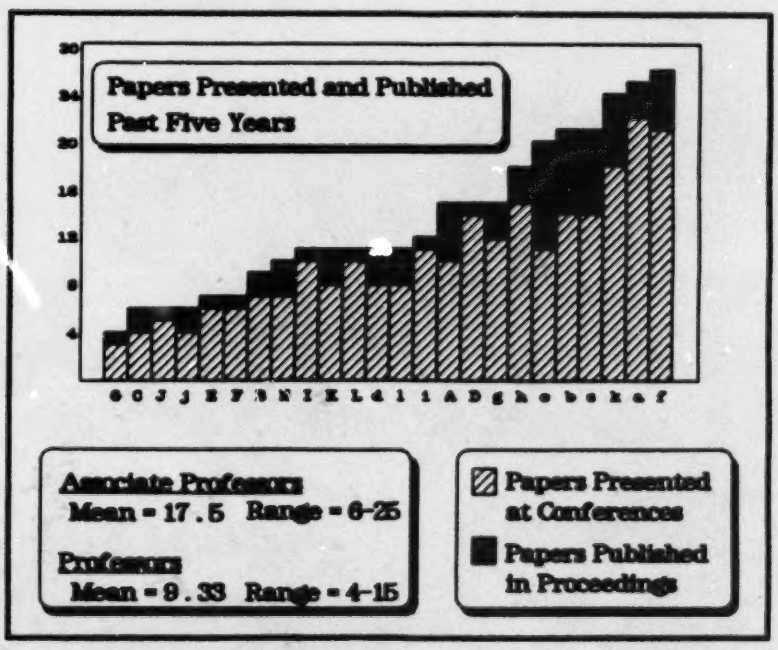

Figure 9. Papers Presented & Published by Technical Communication Faculty

It is clear from the profiles that a significant difference between the Associate Professors and the Professors was the frequency with which they published proceedings articles and presented papers. While the two groups were reasonably equivalent in most other areas of publication, they differed here, with Associates presenting nearly twice the number of papers presented by Professors and publishing a little more than twice as much in proceedings. The preferred route to visibility seems clear. It is fair to say, however, that among the group as a whole, although there are exceptions, the publication activities of the group distributed across a spectrum of kinds of publication, with most members routinely publishing work of different sorts and in different places.

It is also clear from their grant-getting history--or lack of it--that the great majority of the research work being done by the group is being done without the benefit of external funding. In all, only nine of the respondents had received funding from external agencies during the research period, a total of 17 grants among them. Neither were they funded by internal funds in large supply. Eleven of the twenty-four respondents had received a total of 19 internal research grants during the survey period (see Figure 10):

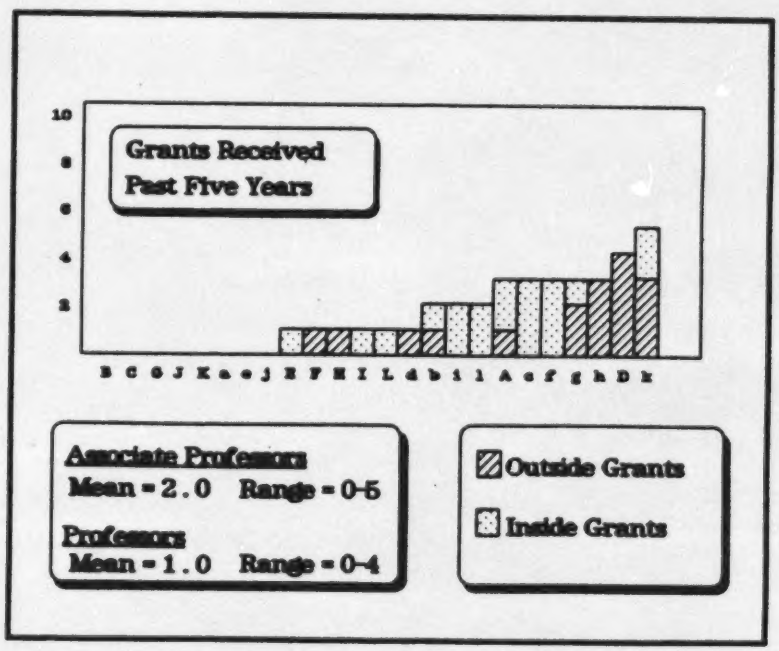

Figure 10. Grants & Stipends Received by Technical Communication Faculty

Their Service Accomplishments

The service activities of the survey group include a substantial number of roles on boards and committees in professionally-related national organizations. Over the five-year review period, twenty-one of the group members had served nationally. Among them, they had occupied a total of 99 such positions. These service activities were more uniform for the Professors, with all twelve of them involved, but nine of the

Associate Professors were involved also, two of them heavily, as the following figure shows (see Figure 11):

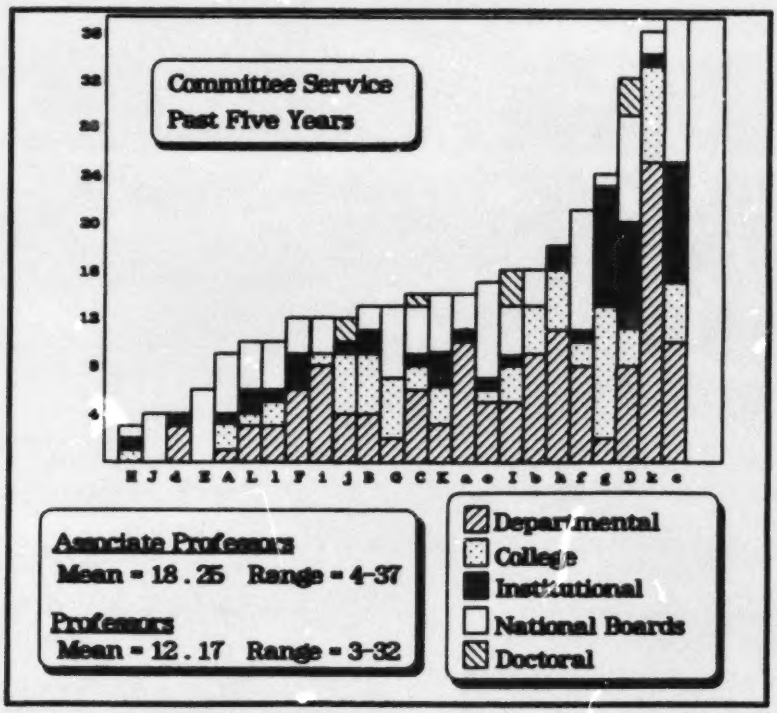

Figure 11. Service Activities by Technical Communication Faculty

Another significant kind of external service activity revealed by the survey is paid consulting work for industry, business, and government. All but three of the survey group had engaged in this kind of activity over the five-year period, among them providing an astonishing total of 1,182 day's worth of paid industrial consulting—a total of 3.2 years of consulting work for the group as a whole! As one might guess, the Associate Professors were less frequently involved in this sort of work than the Professors—a mean of 36 days each versus a mean of 62 days each during the five-year period. However, paid consulting work was a frequent activity for at least twenty of the twenty-four group members at both ranks.

Editorial consulting for publishing houses was also a frequent activity for many members of the group. During the review period twenty-two of them performed such service, among them a total of 235 times. In this case the two groups were almost equally involved, with the Associate Professors just slightly more active. The following figure shows both of these two types of consulting (see Figure 12):

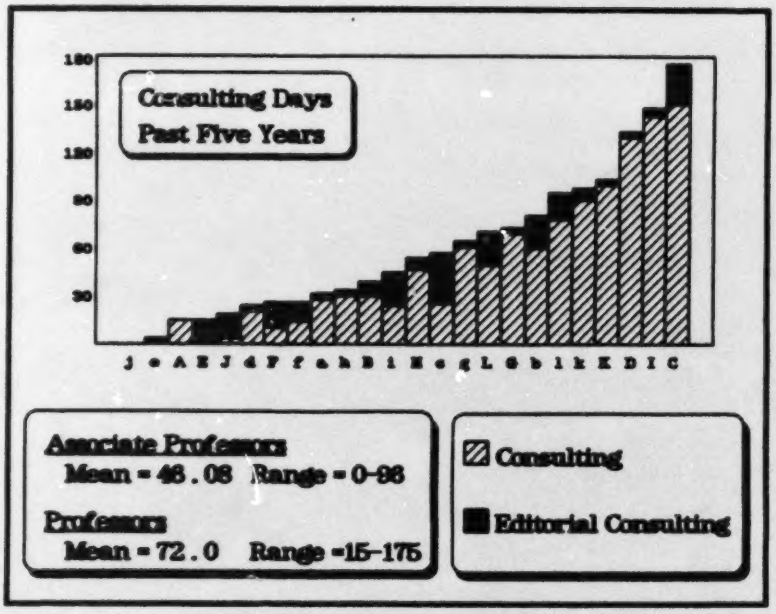

Figure 12. Consulting by Technical Communication Faculty

Professionally-related community service was another kind of activity which the survey attempted to document. And it is clear from the results that the group are frequently involved at the community level in ways that directly relate to their professional competences. For example, many of the group members were active during the review period in working with local chapters of the Society for Technical Communication, with local school systems, and with various societies for technical professionals. In many cases they presented workshops or served on committees which in some way connected their academic lives to their community lives. However, the diversity of these activities (and the difficult task of identifying types of organizations from unfamiliar names) made it impossible to provide accurate summaries in this category. Suffice it to say that many of the respondents did report community service work connected with their professions.

Professional service internal to the respondents' institutions can be divided into four areas: service on graduate committees, service on institution-level committees, service on College-level committees, and service to the department.

No doubt, the near-absence of doctoral programs means that the survey group members are only infrequently serving as the chairperson of successfully-completed doctoral dissertations during the review period, a measure of professional accomplishment commonly applied to many academics. In all, only four of the group members had served in that capacity during the review, among them chairing a total of 9 completed dissertations. The survey failed to uncover the specific number of master's theses supervised; however, with fewer than half of the survey group teaching in programs with graduate degrees--and several of those relatively new programs--the

number is certainly small in relation to the numbers in established graduate programs.

In other types of institutional service, the group were all involved regularly and fairly heavily. At the department level, the Associate Professors were more than twice as active as the Professors, but the Professors had the slight edge in service at the college level and institution level (refer back to Figure 11).

As the profile reveals, there were exceptions, but the overall view is of a faculty with generally heavy service committments except in service on graduate degree committees.

Some Thoughts on Criteria and Procedures

Two equally limiting views of the information presented in this paper are no doubt possible. One view—an "insider's" view—might say, " Look how tall we are; look how active and accomplished these people are despite difficult work situations which provide heavy teaching and service loads, which offer few of the research supports of degree programs and graduate education, and which fall curiously between the domains of liberal arts on the one hand and the social scientific and technical on the other. We can use this data as a sufficient bench mark against which to measure Technical Communication faculty." Another limiting view, an outsider's view, might say, "Look how short they are; in terms of conventional academic measures of evaluation how do these people really measure up? If we use this data as a basis for evaluating faculty, aren't we using a 'short yard-stick'?"

The one view would lead to a complacent and limiting definition of the status Technical Communication, ignoring the current differences between work in the field and other fields and accepting a developing field as if it were a developed field. The other view would also ignore the distinctive features of work in Technical Communication, but it would simply reject the data presented here as, at best, meaningless and, at worst, a confirmation of their skepticism.

It is especially important, I think, that neither the defensive insider's view nor the skeptical outsider's view be allowed to color the data which has been presented. Technical Communication is a young, developing academic field, but at the same time it does appear to differ from other fields in some important areas which should be taken into account during evaluations.

Whatever the use of the specific research presented in this paper, I think it is essential that the evaluation of Technical Communication faculty—and indeed all faculty—take into account other research on the general topic of faculty evaluation. In that regard, I particularly recommend John A. Centra's recent book, Determining Faculty Effectiveness as a useful source [2]. A synthesis and review of current research on the general issues of faculty evaluation, it provides useful insights to the practices of large numbers of institutions, to the differences of practice among types of institutions, and to the effectiveness of a variety of evaluation procedures. It also contains an

excellent bibliography on faculty evaluation for those who wish to read further.

The Criteria: Quality, Quantity, and Kind

I would suggest that evaluations of Technical Communication faculty be based upon careful analysis of the same three factors which can be effectively used to evaluate any faculty: the quality of their teaching, research, service; the quantity of their teaching, research, and service; and the kind of their teaching, research, and service. I would further suggest that the quantitative information which has been presented in this paper can be used meaningfully only if applied with recognition of differences in institutions and only if applied also to other faculty being evaluated at any particular institution. That is, to use these profiles as measures of how Technical Communication faculty "stack up" without applying those same measures to other faculty at individual institutions is to ignore significant differences in institutional objectives and criteria.

The Evidences of Teaching Accomplishment

In the assessment of teaching accomplishment, I suggest that the quality, quantity, level, and kind be carefully considered. I also suggest that the evidences of teaching effectiveness include not only student evaluation—the normal measure—but also evidences taken from internal peer evaluation, administrative evaluation of course materials, and evidences of new course development. Additional evidences might include those additional ones discussed by Centra in Determining Faculty Effectiveness: reviews of videotapes of actual instruction, self-assessment reports, and participation in teacher-improvement workshops.

I would also warn evaluators to be careful to separate the evaluation of teaching from the evaluation of publication. There is a danger, I think, in equating an active publication record with effective teaching. Yet, the research that has been published on that question of relationship is unclear and contradictory. One study done by McDaniel and Feldusen [3] found a negative relationship between active publication and high teacher ratings; another study (Voeks) found no relationship [4]; a third study (Bresler) found a positive relationship [5]; a fourth study (Stallings and Singhal) found a positive, but slight relationship [6]; and a fifth study (Linsky and Straus), after studying data from 16 institutions, concluded, ". . . there is little correlation between performance in the teaching and research roles, at least as measured here." [7] And Centra concludes, "Publications apparently are not essential for good teaching; therefore the use of publication counts in teacher evaluation will not reflect teaching performance as judged by students. Publications also appear to be unrelated to colleague ratings of teaching." [8] At the very least the evidence of relationship appears too uncertain to justify lumping evaluation of teaching together with evaluation of publication.

The Evidences of Scholarship and Research Accomplishment

In assessment of research and scholarship, I recommend that the evaluation include at least the following evidences of public presentation: books (scholarly books, monographs, textbooks, edited books); articles (those in refereed journals and anthologies), reviews and review articles, grants and grant reports, unrefereed journal articles, proceedings articles, and papers presented at professional conferences. I also recommend that other kinds of public presentation of research be taken into account:

reports, journal editing, and miscellaneous commercial or popular publication.

In looking at the relation between book and article publication patterns in the humanities and comparing them to the book and article publication patterns in Technical Communication, it may be well to point out, as Centra does, that books (i.e., scholarly books) tend to be a more characteristic mode of publication in the humanities and social sciences than in the sciences. [9] Or, I would add, in engineering. Thus, where as in the humanities the publication of a book often is a requirement for tenure or promotion, in some disciplines with which technical communication has an affinity the primary measure of evaluation is the refereed journal article. In engineering, for example, a book tends to be less commonly expected because it is not the primary medium for presenting research contributions. Also as Centra points out, scientific and technical disciplines tend to emphasize grants and funding received (and thus grant reports) more than do other types of departments. In the case of proceedings publications, I would also remind evaluators that commonly in the sciences, proceedings publication is regarded as a quick and effective way to make new information available, although it is true that proceedings in the sciences tend to be of high quality and are frequently refereed. In other words, publishing articles in proceedings is not inherently inappropriate, particularly if the nature of the material warrants early dissemination. It is fair to say, however, that proceedings publication in other disciplines <u>is</u> generally regarded as a temporary alternative to slower but more widely disseminated forms of publication.

Finally, it may be well to remember also that whatever the types of publication a candidate might have, the essential value of that publication is that it makes scholarly research available to a profession and a public. Not all candidates have done that, and in my view candidates who <u>have</u> should be encouraged and rewarded, taking into account of course that modes of publication and public presentation are both different and unequal. As Centra points out, a 1977 study of 4,300 professors from 158 institutions found that 29 percent of them had never published an article, 60 percent had not published more than four articles, 59 percent had never written or edited a book or monograph, and 60 percent had never received funding for research. [10] These figures may help to provide a little perspective both on the research data presented in this paper and on the publication record of a particular candidate.

In relation to the pedagogical emphasis of much of the publication in Technical Communication, it is true there is such an emphasis in much of the work reviewed for this project. A number of pedagogical articles are among the publications , as are a number of textbooks. And it is also true that such an emphasis is probably extereme and may be an appropriate source of concern for people inside the field and for evaluators—at least over time. However, as it presently exists, Technical Communication is in most schools a service teaching activity, not an area of graduate study and research. It is a developing area. Accordingly, I think the question becomes one of context: in schools in which service teaching is the business of the Technical Communication faculty, evaluators should be willing to see some emphasis upon pedagogical articles and textbooks. In schools with degree and graduate programs in Technical Communication and research emphasis, evaluators should look for more emphasis upon basic research. For a time, at least, the pedagogical emphasis may continue, but with development, the field should move away from that emphasis. I would also add that among pedagogical publications, there are certainly those that

function to introduce new, theoretical, and important information—as well as those that are less original. For example, few people would argue that even though they used a freshman textbook to do it, Young, Becker, and Pike introduced new composition theory by that means in the early 1970's, and in doing so created (or helped to create) a true revolution in the field of compositon.

In order to assure that the quality of published work is sound, it is especially important, I think, to seek and use qualified external peer reviewers to sumbit assessments of quality. As Centra indicates, there is a particular need for external peer evaluation in specialized areas of research. He says, " In evaluating research in specialized ares, scholars at other institutions are probably essential...." [11] This is not to say that external evaluators should be given the decisive vote in promotion/ tenure cases; indeed they need not even be asked whether they would recommend promotion or tenure. They may perform a very useful service, however, if they are asked simply to assess the quality of published work in relation to other work in the field, or, as Centra suggests, to answer specific questions touching upon the signigficance of the candidate's accumulated efforts. For many department administrators, unfamiliar with publications in Technical Communication, determining that significance and continuity of scholarship is an especially difficult task and a key issue in evaluation.

The Evidences of Service Accomplishment

In assessing service accomplishments, I suggest that at least the following be considered: service at the national level through professional organizations; service on doctoral and master's committees; consulting and editorial consulting; service to the institution, the college, and the department; and service to the community. If I may add a suggestion given me by the Chairman of one of the technical departments in the Engineering College at Michigan, I would also recommend that workshop teaching be regarded as a potentially valuable service. As my colleague pointed out, being asked to teach workshops acknowledges expertise and evidences a candidate's position in the field—at least he felt that it did in his own Engineering discipline.

In relation to consulting work particularly, I suggest that the same view be taken for Technical Communication faculty as is frequently applied to consultants in social science and technical disciplines: that consulting is an evidence of acknowledged acomplishment, that it is encouraged and rewarded because it can contribute to teaching and research, but that its ultimate value should be measured in terms of evidences that it has in fact contributed to teaching and research.

On this latter point I know there is some disagreement. Some people see consulting as a value in itself. I will say only that in making this recommendation, I have interviewed the Chairs of a number of technical departments in which consulting is a normal part of faculty work. In every case their comments indicated that consulting is encouraged and rewarded, that it is evidence of a kind, but that the "pay off" should be in other than money earned—that is, in terms of direct influence on teaching, research, and publication.

I would also recommend that evaluators consider the difference between patterns of consulting in English departments (the home of many Technical Communication

faculty) and the patterns in the academic community generally. Specifically, I recommend they read a study by James D. Marver and Carl Vernon Patton, "The Correlates of Consultation: American Academics in the 'Real World.'" [12] This study points out that the Humanities disciplines contain 20 percent of all academics but provide only 11 percent of all paid consultants. It further points out that the pattern in Humanities is atypical. In all, the study concludes, "...more than one-third of American academics perform consulting services for pay. Most paid consultants are located at universities (rather than four-year colleges and junior colleges) and a greater percentage of faculty members in higher quality institutions consult for fees. Paid consultants tend to be more active in departmental affairs and faculty governance than non-consultants, and they tend to publish more as well..... ." [13] In other words, I think evaluators should be prepared to see consulting as perhaps an unfamiliar type of service but as a potentially valuable service nonetheless.

Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Research

The research presented in this paper has been an attempt to help administrators and faculty sort out guidelines and criteria for evaluation of Technical Communication faculty. I hope it has provided something useful. At least for me, doing the research has been informative, and I want to thank the approximately 200 persons who helped me to carry out the project. Particularly, I want to thank the twenty-five persons who gave me permission to rummage so fully into their professional lives and even private lives.

I also want to end with two general observations which have struck me during this research. First, I was struck by how rapidly Technical Communication has developed as an academic discipline and how much accomplishment the current study has revealed compared to what a similar study of even five years ago might have revealed. That is speculative, of course, but it seems to me that although there may yet be a long way to travel, a long trip has already been made too. Second, I want to urge that this study be used, in about five year's time, as a basis for a similar, comparative study of the next generation of Technical Communication faculty. In focussing upon the Associate and full Professors, this study has ignored the work of a newly-emerging, research-active, accomplished group of entry-level faculty. Yet, just as I am convinced that Technical Communication faculty have come some distance already, I am convinced that these new faculty will far surpass their predecessors in accomplishments. I hope someone will be willing to look at the evidence in about five years and see if I am correct.

References

1. During the research reported in this paper I received many letters from colleagues at a number of institutions. The quotations presented here are from some of those letters. Since I promised anonymity to all persons involved in the research project, I will not identify the individuals quoted here.

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6. William M. Stallings and Sushilla Singhal. "Some Observations on the Relationships Between Research Productivity and Student Evaluation of Courses and Teaching." American Sociologist, 5 (May 1970), 141-43.

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8. Centra, 35.

9. Centra, 123.

10. Centra, 13-14.

11. Centra, 121.

12. James D. Marver and Carl V. Patton. "The Correlates of Consultation: American Academics in the 'Real World.'" Journal of Higher Education, 5, (1976), 319-335.

13. Marver and Patton, 334-35.